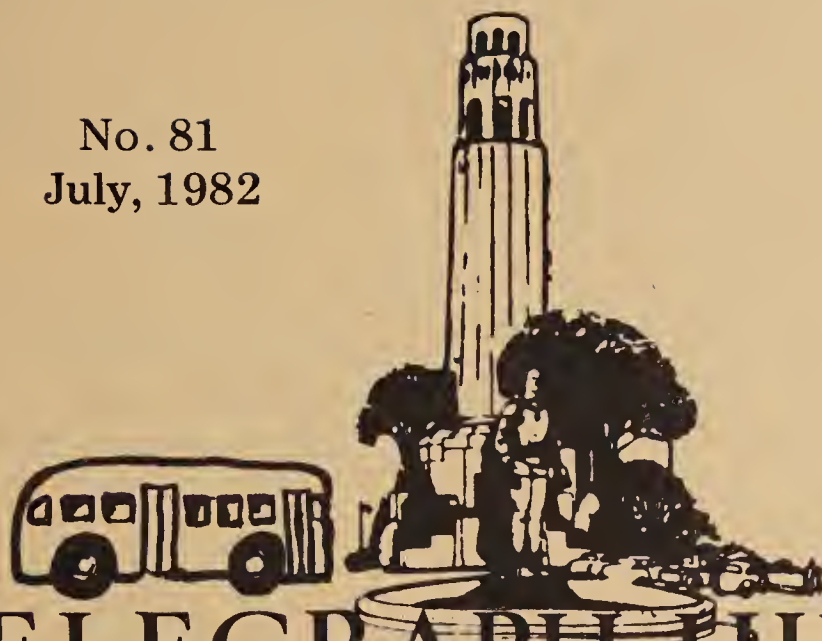


No. 81
July, 1982



What's Inside?

General Membership
Meeting (see back cover)

Pfeiffer Street Park

Along Columbus Avenue

TELEGRAPH HILL SEMAPHORE

Publication of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers

Planning and Zoning Update

Here is an update on a number of important neighborhood zoning and planning projects that affect Telegraph Hill.

- *1299 Sansome, King Antiques.* On June 10, the Planning Commission was asked to approve an Environmental Impact Report and Discretionary Review of Gerson Bakar's seven-story office project at the foot of Filbert steps. THD argued for five stories. Discretionary Review was denied and seven stories were approved.
- *475 Lombard, Figone condominiums.* The Planning Commission on June 10 was to hear a request for approval of a conditional use permit for construction of a seven-unit condominium on the two-lot site. A variance request to extend the building into backyard space has been denied by the Zoning Department, but a second variance request to extend one unit laterally was approved. THD argued against the project's height above, and its increase in density over, neighboring buildings. The final decision on the variances and the conditional use permit will be made at a hearing on July 1.
- *Levi Plaza.* The Planning Commission has illegally extended the time for additional construction on the site. THD opposed the extension and wanted any additional construction beyond the January 3, 1982 approval date to undergo scrutiny as a new conditional use. The Planning Commission denied our request.

THD OFFICERS, DIRECTOR, AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS



OFFICERS:

President	*Jerry Petruzzelli	288 Union	397-6043
Vice President	*Judy Robinson	562B Lombard	982-8533
Recording Secretary	Jeanne Milligan	486 Union	989-0494
Corresponding Secretary	Helga Ginige . . . . .	.43 Edith	981-8133
Treasurer	*Bob Bullock	31 Genoa	391-3645
Financial Secretary	Virginia Sletteland	448 Greenwich	781-4352
Historian	David Myrick . . . . .	.390 Chestnut	982-4670
Editor— <i>Semaphore</i>	Lynne Burwell . . . . .	.321 Chestnut	982-9715

*denotes Executive Committee

DIRECTORS, 1982-1984:

Greg Jones	595 Golden Gate	986-6412
*Herb Kosovitz. . . . .	.340 Chestnut	398-0757
Maryanna Otsea	1236 Montgomery	421-0768
Nan Roth.	2017 Grant	397-2176

DIRECTORS, 1981-1983:

*Bill Snow	1245 Kearny	397-7657
Jerry Lubenow	300 Lombard	981-8279
JoEtta Agee	288 Union	981-2521
Jack Moss	265 Telegraph Hill	781-4077
Ex Officio Jim Augustino426 Vallejo	956-1889

STANDING COMMITTEES:

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Membership	Virginia Sletteland	448 Greenwich	781-4352
Program	Nan Roth.	2017 Grant	397-2176
<i>Semaphore</i>	Lynne Burwell . . . . .	.321 Chestnut	982-9715

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

Crime Prevention	Maryanna Otsea	1236 Montgomery	421-0768
	Lori Viti	1235 Montgomery	391-0386
Landmarks	Katherine Koelsch	664B Greenwich	398-0752
	David Myrick . . . . .	.390 Chestnut	982-4670
Library	Mary Burns		
Movies	Margaret Gwathmey. . . . .	.273 Green	982-4221
Noise	Betty Rader . . . . .	.17 Alta	392-0227
Parking/Traffic	Nancy Katz	2 Whiting	986-1890
Parks and Trees	Jerry Lubenow	300 Lombard	981-8279
Planning and Zoning	Judy Robinson	562B Lombard	982-8533
	Herb Kosovitz. . . . .	.340 Chestnut	398-0757
	Jack Moss	265 Telegraph Hill	781-4077
Neighborhood Liaison	Jim Augustino . . . . .	.426 Vallejo	956-1889
Social	Jeanne Milligan	486 Union	989-0494
	Bill Snow	1245 Kearny	397-7657
Waterfront	Bob Katz	2 Whiting	986-1890

MEMBERS: Please call these chairs and volunteer to serve today!

- *Pier 15 Office Building.* THD was approached by developers seeking its views on a four-story office building proposed for the corner of Front, Union, Green, and Embarcadero. The project would require a conditional use permit for minimum parking. THD asked for further details.
- *San Francisco's Housing Element.* A second draft of the planning department's proposals was to be available by the end of May and a public hearing scheduled on the matter three weeks after release of the draft. An environmental impact report on the housing element will be available the end of June and a hearing will be held in July, with public hearings on adoption of the housing proposals scheduled for the end of August.
- *725 Greenwich Office Building.* The Board of Supervisors disapproved a proposed commercial office building opposite North Beach playground on May 10, rejecting the developer's appeal of a regative ruling by the Planning Commission. The Board acted in response to strong opposition from the THD, North Beach Neighbors' Association, and others in the community. The vote was an important test of the Board's commitment to downzoning along the Columbus Avenue corridor and represents a substantial victory for THD and other neighborhood groups that support downzoning.
- *Zoning of North Beach.* A proposal to lower the current height limits from 65 to 40 feet and to reduce commercial use of buildings above the first floor along Columbus Avenue and around Washington Square was filed in August, 1981 by property owners and residents of the area supported by THD. It provided the impetus for Planning Commission approval on May 6, 1982, of a similar measure proposed by the Planning Department. The city action puts the new zoning into effect for one year while the matter is studied.
- *Chestnut and Columbus Commercial Building.* "Chestnut Court" developers sought a parking variance for the corner (Chestnut and Columbus) building which they plan to renovate for expanded commercial use. This building is adjacent to a proposed condominium project by the same developers along Columbus Avenue (the former Doggy Diner space). THD strongly opposed the parking variance, which is now being reviewed by the city.
- *Washington Square Inn.* Inn owners sought THD views on adding one more story to the present building at Filbert and Stockton Streets. THD board of directors approved the concept but withheld formal action until they could see actual drawings of the proposed changes. No variances were contemplated by the owners who made a presentation to THD members May 11.
- *Historic Landmark Status for Northeast Waterfront.* The Landmarks Preservation Advisory board on June 9, 1982, approved boundaries for a historic district below Telegraph Hill between Broadway and Union, Sansome and Embarcadero. The Board will consider specific buildings within the district at a later date.



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Dear Editor,

Semaphore continues to look good and to be filled with useful information. As one who does not attend meetings, I am especially appreciative of names, addresses, listings, etc. where I can write to express my opinion.

Also, may I suggest a boycott of Dante's until they fulfill their responsibilities to our neighborhood by replacing the trees (paid for by *our* tax money) they so wantonly destroyed? I have written them saying I won't eat there. Maybe if enough people do the same thing they'll understand that the issue is an important one. As we all know, it's individuals who, for whatever reasons, think they are exceptions who can—if we don't watch out—slowly but surely destroy our environment.

Sincerely,
John D. Dolan

Dear Editor,

For over 20 years the elevated Embarcadero Freeway has obscured San Francisco's historic Ferry Building and walled off the waterfront from the rest of the city. Restoration of the Ferry Building, new parks and open space, substantial waterfront housing and office space—a true Renaissance of the waterfront depend on the freeway removal. A comprehensive transit program has been worked out, speeding up rather than slowing down travel, including public transportation from China Basin to Fisherman's Wharf. Money has been set aside from the Interstate Highway Trust Fund to make all this possible. A representative citizens Committee, with THD participation, is hard at work to realize this

program that skeptics had thought impossible. One unfortunate alternative proposal endangers the success of the freeway removal: the suggestion to run Southern Pacific commute trains along the waterfront all the way to the Ferry Building or Rincon Annex. Far from solving traffic problems, long trains, pulled by noisy and polluting diesel engines (6 per day at first, increasing to 40 to 60 per day in the future!) would replace the stationary Embarcadero Freeway barrier with a moving one. Our only chance to revitalize the waterfront by the freeway removal must not be lost by this ill-advised scheme.

Robert Katz

Dear Telegraph Hill Dwellers,

It's summer again, and this year, as in past years, we are trying to get the help we need to send some of our needy youth to summer camp. This program has benefited and inspired many of the young people of this Center to continue their education and become useful citizens.

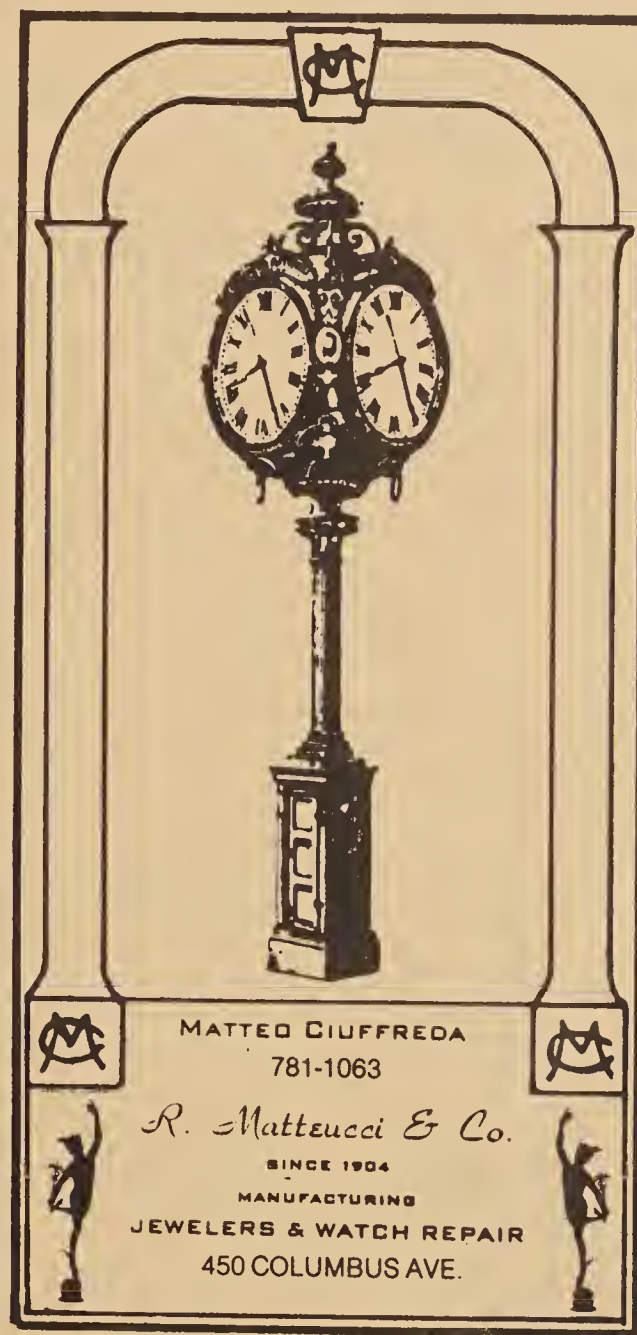
Your help, by sponsoring one of these young people, so they can go to camp, is urgently needed. We are seeking \$25.00 for each person you choose to support. The remainder of their cost for a week of camp will be contributed by their parents and the Guardsmens' organization. The cost for each child is \$100.00.

I am counting on your contribution again this year, and would appreciate having your tax-deductible check by July 15, so that reservations can be confirmed.

Lee Roberson
Youth Director
Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center

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PARAKEETS FIND HOME ON TELEGRAPH HILL

By Carl Irving

Most mornings on Telegraph Hill, a flock of parakeets settles into a pair of trees just across from Julius Castle.

This restless, argumentative band stays there in the sun for a while, digesting the offerings from friendly humans in the dwellings along nearby slopes.

The parakeets of Telegraph Hill have become part of the surroundings, a bit of color and noise that most residents welcome. Similar groups of birds, whose ancestors come from Australia and Central and South America, have been reported around the Fort Mason area.

The birds were either abandoned or escaped from cages in the vicinity, according to Stephen Bailey, ornithologist for the Golden Gate Audubon Society. They have been flying loose in San Francisco for at least a decade.

Parakeets have been popular pets because they are personable, durable and colorful. Although not as versatile as the larger members of the parrot family, they can memorize a number of words and noises and willingly recite them. They also withstand far more rigors than the tender canaries and often live more than a dozen years.

"As long as there are no major predators they will do well in San Francisco, even though it isn't as warm as their ancestral lands," says Bailey.

Two types have gathered around Telegraph Hill and Fort Mason: the yellow-winged variety from Latin America and the budge-rigar from Australia.

Flocks have prospered in Florida and Southern California, but Bailey doubts that they have multiplied very much here.

They've become an established fact south of the Tehachapis, according to Luis Baptista, chairman of ornithology for the Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. Flocks of them have been identified as having different accents, linking them to certain neighborhoods. Observers can spot the Altadena flock as opposed to the Pasadena flock, for instance.

"It's not that difficult to survive here, but they don't seem to thrive," he says. When they do nest in California, they prefer hollows in palms or holes in other types of trees, and sometimes will oust starlings, who in turn probably have thrown out native birds. (The starlings came from across the Atlantic.)

They survive in San Francisco in great part on fruits and nuts offered by residents, according to one of them, Eileen Stewart, who lives on Montgomery. "They come by every morning and cheer us up," she says.

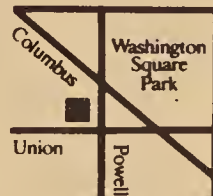
Occasionally, parakeets will succumb to parrot fever, a respiratory illness that can infect people. But Craig Machado, veterinarian at the San Francisco Zoo, believes that chance has to be "very remote."

The zoo concentrates on bigger birds, but Machado sees the parakeets as a welcome addition in San Francisco: "They add a bit of color to life."

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ENDORISING CANDIDATES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE

Should THD hold public officials accountable for their votes on matters affecting Telegraph Hill and North Beach? A committee has been formed to study the by-laws; they will present their conclusions to the general membership on July 27th. For more information, call Jim Augustino at 956-1889 (evenings).

LOCKS AND KEYS

Most burglars take the path of least resistance, and overconfident Hill Dwellers who carelessly leave their windows open can be easy targets. A company named Shur-Lok sells a small device at the modest price of \$1.95 that should discourage all but the most determined intruder. It is easily installed on single hung and sliding windows and allows you to open the window wide enough for ventilation but narrow enough to keep intruders out. Unfortunately, it doesn't keep out the slugs.

We honor Mrs. F. Justin McCarthy, who died in May. She was among those who sparked the early development of THD over twenty years ago.

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Jerry Petruzzelli
Judy Robinson
Lori Viti

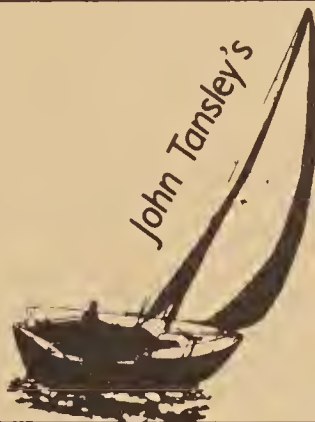
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Along the Lower Avenue

—by Herb Kosovitz

Most of us are familiar with Upper Columbus Avenue, from Washington Square to Broadway, and know it as the spine of North Beach. More like a country cousin, lacking in Italian café chic, the Lower Avenue has, nonetheless, an unhurried, useful charm of its own. These days tourists generally peel off at Stockton (the more direct route to their beloved Pier 39). Happily, this leaves the semi-discovered Lower Avenue a pleasant, uncrowded, and rewarding place for us to spend some time.

Enterprises, and other former THD board members duck into Bruno's to look for bargains in wine or to ask Kevin to research French vermouths. At Columbus Camera it isn't hard to get John interested in one's photographic problems or to coax a better-than-downtown color enlargement from him. The candid shots of North Beach to be found among the selection at the Postcard Palace are perfect for sending notes from home. The lunch special at Hamaichi (never crowded) is a real bargain. The old toys in the window of number 718 are gone, but around the corner on Greenwich



The first block north of the Square has everyone's favorite Graffeo's Coffee to lure the uptown types north of Filbert. Gino Gelateria, replacing the old hardware store on the corner, may be a sign of flashier things to come, but down the block, away from La Cafferata and PIP's, is Isabella's Little Columbus Deli, featuring Dagwood sandwiches and baklava soufflé. Katherine Koelsch has been seen being coiffed at Hare



at Jansen you might catch a glimpse of a feathered work of art from Karen Ezekiel's studio in the old grocery store.

Further down the avenue, you might have tried La Bussola, but have you been into Lyle Tuttle's Tattoo Rose Café? Featuring poetry readings, an "open mike" night, and lots to read on the walls and windows, it's like a refugee from Grant Avenue in the 50's. Past the gas station you can snack al-fresco at Kentucky Fried Chicken and watch the cable cars go by. For the Doggie Diner site a promising new development of residential units over ground floor commercial space is in the works. That will be a welcome addition to the block and nicely in keeping with the rezoning we're trying to achieve. Chez Marguerite, the Boarding House, La Rocca's old-time bar, Bimbo's 365, are all solid establishments. Forever changing its name is the bar at Chestnut across from Safeway. Currently the Casa Mare, with Chinese characters below the English, it has a unique new Chinatown look. A really welcome name, and functional change, across the street, is the relatively new Mumm's Flower Shop, which replaced the old gun shop.

Take a look at the fenced and neatly tended vegetable and flower garden at the housing development at Francisco, wave to Dick Mary at our friendly neighborhood gas station at the corner of Bay, cross over to Tower Records, and then walk back up the Lower Avenue for some low-level vistas of the habitat of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers on your left.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY NEIGHBORHOOD PATROL

Over a year ago, many of us became concerned about break-ins and other unpleasant happenings on and around the Hill and decided it would be a good idea to walk our neighborhood at various times of the day and night. Thus the Telegraph Hill Street Patrol was born.

At the present time we have about 75 volunteers available for our neighborhood patrols. Telephone callers schedule walkers on a monthly and bimonthly basis. Normally each caller contacts about ten people. Lori Viti and Maryanna Otsea have been coordinating the walks and supply the callers with lists of names to call, as well as a schedule of dates, times, and places for meeting. A Captain is appointed for each walk, he/she receives the names of all walkers, and walkers gather at a convenient meeting place.

These walks are *fun*!! Besides meeting neighbors, we often discover new routes (short cuts), and learn some history about the homes in our area. Groups consist of four or more, and each walker is asked to bring a shriek alarm, a flashlight, a dime, and pencil and paper. The purpose of these walks is: (1) to raise community consciousness about crime (2) to look for suspicious activity and report it to police, and (3) to become familiar with all the streets on the Hill.

Are you interested in walking the streets of Telegraph Hill? We are always ready to welcome new recruits—either for making telephone calls or walking. Do give us a call and share your thoughts and ideas: Lori Viti (391-0386) and Maryanna Otsea (421-0768).



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HELICOPTERS: THE PUBLIC (AND SF MASTERPLAN) BE DAMNED!

The San Francisco Masterplan for the Waterfront from China Basin to the Municipal Pier states unequivocally: "*Prohibit heliports*" (policy 6, p. 58). Nothing could be more clear—except to the Port and the Planning Department.

Spirit Airways, whose noisy sightseeing helicopters have disturbed Potrero Hill, Telegraph Hill, Russian Hill, the Marina, Nob Hill, and Golden Gate Park for years, is losing its pad at Pier 46. Since it operates on a 30-day license, the Port is under no obligation to provide a new pad. Yet the Port Director asked for planning approval to relocate Spirit Airways on Pier 44 and to expand operations, allowing KPIX, KRON, KGO, and KTVU 160 monthly landings and takeoffs. All this is in clear violation of the Masterplan. Along comes AIR EXEC, a Concord organization, asking for the same privileges on Pier 44, again with port support.

How does the planning staff respond? It ignores repeated protests from the THD Waterfront Committee and other neighborhoods and meets with the helicopter associations and their lobbyists, keeping all affected neighborhoods uninformed while it draws up a draft resolution in favor of Spirit Airways.

So far, strong protests by 4 neighborhoods at Planning Commission hearings have temporarily stopped this violation of the Waterfront Plan. The next hearing will be on July 1st. Meanwhile, attempts to get relief from the drone of the helicopters that operate under current port leases are mired at the Board of Supervisors—who have not even come up with a preliminary draft of a noise ordinance amendment.

DUES WARNING! Members who have not yet paid their 82-83 dues:

This is the last *Semaphore* you will receive unless you get your dues in by October 1. Send your check for \$8 per person along with your legible name and address to:

Virginia M. Sletteland
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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, July 27

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

MOTIONS PASSED—March 31, 1982

To lend moral support and possible financial support to be determined by the board of directors for a CEQA-based lawsuit concerning 1000 Montgomery.

To form a special committee to draft a letter concerning the Malt Factory EIR, endorsing the letters sent by Roth and Robinson and listing further objections to the project (towers, open space, and the rodent problem).

To adopt the Katz waterfront committee document regarding the Delta King and to send a letter reinforcing the recommendations.

To support the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center project to give children summer jobs selling "Save the Cable Cars" T-shirts. Also, to send a letter to Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center congratulating them on their successful efforts to repaint the housing projects.

MOTIONS PASSED—April 12, 1982

To accept the slate of candidates for the board of directors presented by the nominating committee, as published in the April *Semaphore*.

To oppose any change in the posted hours for preferential parking and to oppose any reduction in staff that enforces it.

To thank Jim Augustino for serving ably as president for the last two years.

MOTIONS PASSED—April 20, 1982

To approve the form of signature card for savings accounts and money market funds.

To accept the 1982-83 budget as presented on March 31, 1982.

To send letters from the president of THD to former officers and committee chairs thanking them for their participation.

To authorize Herb Kosovitz and Anne Halsted to draft a proposal for a neighborhood commercial rezoning study to present to the planning and zoning committee at a special meeting within two months.

To oppose a variance for a 3-foot extension of a sidewalk at the corner of Union and Montgomery.

To authorize the chairperson of the planning and zoning committee to inquire at any time into the status of permits and licenses before any city agency.

To write a letter of inquiry to the Bureau of Building Inspection to ascertain the status of the permit for 537-9 Lombard.

To send the issue of the World Theater to the planning and zoning committee.

To send letters of appreciation to the chairs of the Crime Committee, thanking them for their sustained work in keeping the street patrol active for over one year.

To appoint Herb Kosovitz and Bill Snow to the executive committee.

MOTIONS PASSED—May 18, 1982

To contribute \$250 to Save No. Beach Now and to consider additional funds pending progress on fundraising.

To allow our name to be used on a letter to be sent out by Save No. Beach Now.

To allow Save No. Beach Now to use our mailing list, with appropriate safeguards.

To support the committee in its resolution to call the small park above Pfeiffer St. at Grant the Pfeiffer Street Park.

To oppose a parking variance at the Chestnut Court development at Columbus and Chestnut.



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page 16

MOTIONS (continued from page 15)

MOTIONS PASSED—June 15, 1982

To leave the responsibility for the Grant Avenue Street Fair to Greg Jones.

To approve a committee to reconsider amending the by-laws (re: endorsing candidates for political office).

To not oppose the conditional use permit for 721 Filbert to expand to its allowable width.

To send a letter supporting residential use on 50 Osgood Place (so. side of Broadway).

PFEIFFER STREET PARK

A neighborhood committee, consisting of Maggie Baylis, Jack Early, Nancy Katz, Herb Kosovitz, and Nan Roth has been working on plans for this park with landscape architect Paul Lattieri. The stub end of Pfeiffer Street, 30 feet wide, running eastward from Grant Avenue for approximately 140 feet, rises to an elevation of about 124 feet above the Bay. It is to be developed with planting, an access path and rustic steps, and a platform at its highest point that will provide a spectacular view of the Bay, the bridges, and maritime activity.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

July 27, 1982	Dinner Meeting
August 17	Directors' Meeting
September 21	Directors' Meeting
September 25	Annual Picnic
October 19	Directors' Meeting
November 9	Dinner Meeting
November 16	Directors' Meeting
December 12	Christmas Cocktails
December 21	Directors' Meeting

ROSSI PHARMACY

Rossi Pharmacy's continued presence in the neighborhood should come as a welcome affirmation to those of you who've wondered whether signing a petition really does any good. While John Dolan patiently collected 4,739 signatures, the new owners of the Dante Building refused even to discuss a new lease with Rossi's. Not until they received copies of Dolan's petitions did the new owners offer Rossi's a new lease at a greatly increased price. When Rossi's balked, the landlord extended the old lease at the current rate for six months. Finally yielding to the wisdom of neighborhood sentiment, the owners made a more reasonable offer, which Rossi's accepted. Appar-

ently, constructive direct action does help. If only Dante's Restaurant would be as responsive to neighborhood concerns and fulfill their oft-made promise to replace the tree they cut down on Columbus Ave.



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ROSSI CONDOS— GOOD AND BAD NEWS

When Cal Rossi proposed a large condominium complex at Francisco and Grant, THD worked out a set of agreements that were accepted by the developer and incorporated in the Planning Commission's Conditional Use permit.

An important part of the agreement calls for a park on the undeveloped eastern stub of Pfeiffer Street and planning is making good progress (see Pfeiffer Street Park article in this issue).

Unfortunately, some other important conditions are not being observed. Most serious is the absence of a bond to insure neighboring property owners against any damage to their property due to landslides, settling and the like, caused by excavation or similar work. The bond was to be filed *before* construction began. The Planning Department staff and the developer were equally remiss in allowing an unjustifiable delay. Immediate correction has been promised.

Other complaints concern construction noise during hours disallowed by the Conditional Use permit (before 8 a.m., after 5 p.m., or Saturdays and Sundays); parking of trucks in residents' driveways; night delivery of equipment; delivery trucks whose motors idle for long periods; and so forth.

The THD Coordinating Committee has brought these problems to the attention of the developer and the planning staff. Individual complaints can be telephoned to Mr. Earl Bartel, Construction Manager, who has been cooperative in taking care of a number of problems; he can be reached at 986-7579 or 398-4189.

BELT LINE ROUNDHOUSE

The Round House, used to house the old Beltline locomotives on the Embarcadero, was declared a historic landmark with THD support some time ago. The Port Commission has rejected development plans to tear it down and accepted a proposal by "Three Eight One Associates" (Bunje Dowse & Co.) to preserve the main building and "sandbox." While we regret the addition of a 4-story office building to the south (which will partially obscure the Roundhouse itself), we are gratified that the historic building will be restored. The developers have invited THD members to discuss plans with them and so far two constructive meetings have been held.

AIRSPACE

At the end of a toilworn day, in the evening of every Dweller, according to the FAA, comes a time called the quiet hours. During the quiet hours, commercial aircraft are supposed to fly well out over the Bay, away from residential areas. Several Telegraph Hill Dwellers have had their nocturnal reveries rudely disturbed by the whine of 747s bound for the Orient and other exotic ports of call. Those of us who are land-bound and left behind should not have to suffer the added indignity of being overflown during the quiet hours. If you feel similarly, you can make a complaint by calling 273-6005.

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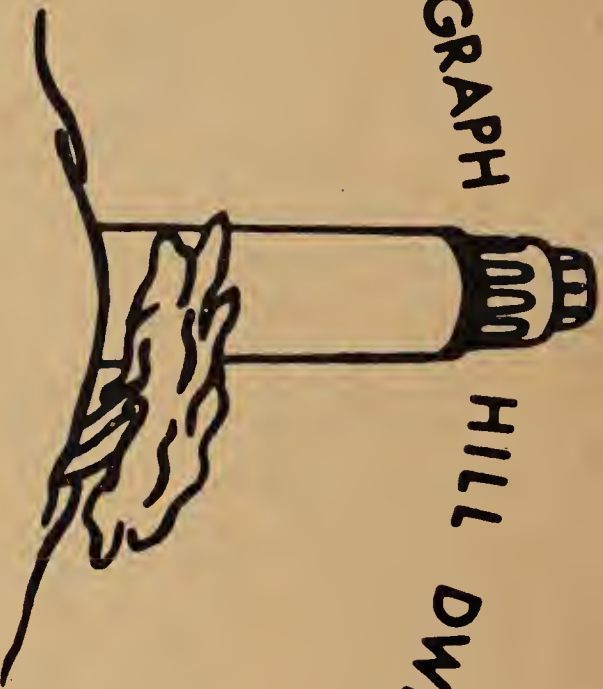
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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, July 27

\$13.00 per person, including tax, tip, & wine
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